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Frederick County
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News Release

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Executive Gardner Proposes Streamlined Process for Craft Beverage Industry

FREDERICK, MD – “Great things are brewing in Frederick County as we lead the state in the craft beverage industry,” said County Executive Jan Gardner today. “My proposal will create a quicker, more streamlined process to support new farm-based business ventures while also respecting the rights of adjacent property owners. They will be able to establish small tasting rooms at wineries, breweries and distilleries so visitors can sample the products before buying.”

Frederick County currently has 12 farm-based tasting rooms offering wine and beer. Eight more wineries and breweries are exploring the option of adding tasting rooms.

Because these operations are farm-based, they are often located within agricultural areas. The text amendment would add “limited tasting rooms” for farm alcoholic beverages in no more than 1,500 square feet of space devoted to customers. These smaller operations would take advantage of the streamlined process with fewer requirements because impacts on the surrounding community are less.

Specifically, owners of limited tasting rooms could obtain zoning certificates, but not need site plan approval, and road frontage requirements would be eliminated.

Today’s proposal follows initiatives Executive Gardner announced recently to help the craft beverage industry. They include a road map to guide entrepreneurs through the start-up process for craft beverage operations; creation of a food truck workgroup to identify ways the county can help to facilitate food trucks working with wineries, breweries, and distilleries; and implementation of a new seasonal outdoor activity permit so it would be easier and less expensive for these businesses to host small events.

For more information, visit www.homegrownfrederick.com/craft-beverages.

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